WHAT IS WRONG?

Or

The World's Plight

By John Losabe

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FOREWORD

THESE pages are, with due deference, offered by the author to those who have social welfare at heart and are prepared to help Christianity to accomplish its purpose.

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WHAT IS WRONG?

OR THE WORLD'S PLIGHT

Chapter I

THE FOLLY OF THEOPHOBIA

FOR so many years has the Almighty been eliminated from the affairs of the world, and so large is the number of those for whom religion has but little meaning or importance, that to answer the question "What is Wrong?" or to paint in true colours "The World's Plight" it is necessary to remind men of the existence of their Creator.

There are those whose attitude towards the Almighty goes beyond mere neglect. Victims of blindness, and too often of pride, they call themselves Atheists or Agnostics. These will tell us when we refer to the works of the Almighty that we mean Nature, to which we may reply that as Nature did not create itself we are back to the first cause Whom we call and revere as God, and we cordially invite our Atheistic and Agnostic friends to join us in our humble and grateful acknowledg-

ment of our indebtedness to Him to whom we owe our existence and to whom we look for our eternal happiness.

Again there are those who think or wish to think that through the advance of scientific knowledge there should be some new alignment, perhaps they imagine through science God is gradually being "found out," and that as a consequence He will have to alter His attitude towards His creatures.

It should be observed that the victims of this absurd frame of mind are not themselves scientists ; nor indeed in most cases do they clearly understand the scientific knowledge of which they speak ; they could hardly be classed even as scientific dilettanti.

The greatest scientific minds have been true believers. They realised that what they had learned only brought home to them how little they really knew. They were aware that scientific progress had added little net gain to man's real happiness and safety, on the contrary it was in many ways a means to his destruction.

Were those who prate of scientific knowledge to remember that no knowledge has given or can give man control over his own existence, that it cannot bring him into life, nor when the moment comes to end man's physical existence can it prolong that existence by one millionth part of a second, they would realise how senseless the claim, that on account of scientific knowledge there must be some new relation between the Creator and His creatures. How impotent does human knowledge appear in the face of death !

The harmony of belief is also disturbed by those who say : " Let us have religion, but do away with dogma."

Religion is defined as human recognition of a super-human controlling Power. If the existence of this Power is acknowledged, shall the information that that Power has given man for his guidance be set aside ? Rather should we be grateful we are not left in ignorance as to our duties in this life and our destiny beyond the grave.

The Almighty *has* revealed truth to man and He has given him a code of laws, all of which constitutes dogma, and as dogma is God's own spoken Word, it cannot be changed, for as God is unchangeable, so must His Word be.

God has implanted in man's mind a conscience that declares a difference between what is right and what is wrong. Had He left man in ignorance of what is expected of him yet responsible for his conduct, He would indeed be an unjust cruel God which our reason tells us He cannot be.

Many of those who strain at religious dogma strive by every means to erect into scientific dogma the theory that man is derived from a lower species; so much in fact has this been insisted on, it obtains general credence among those not fully informed; and yet, not only is no scientific proof forthcoming to sustain this theory, but on the contrary, so far, all investigation leads to the conclusion the theory is untenable.

We are not quarrelling with the theory

of evolution, except when opposed to the fact of creation ; still it is premature to erect that theory into a scientific fact—which, as yet, it is not, and perhaps may never be.

We object to the anti-creationist evolution theory, because it is being used to imbue men's minds with a false philosophy.

Yes, we must insist on the existence of God and on the necessity of taking Him again into partnership, not only in our own individual personal affairs, but also in the public affairs of the world. And the partnership must be not on our terms but *His*.

The world's mistaken attitude towards God is its first and greatest fault, until that is changed nothing can be right.

Chapter II

CHAOTIC RELIGION

THE controlling influence in the material affairs of the world is held by the Christian nations, though their Christianity is often more nominal than real. That influence is to-day chiefly in the hands of the British Empire and the United States.

This predominant influence comes to these nations not because they are possessed of exceptional qualities or of a civilisation superior to that of other peoples, though Englishmen and Americans foolishly flatter themselves into so believing.

It is one of man's weaknesses to regard himself with complacency and in his heart to assume towards his neighbour an attitude of pharisaical superiority.

From this unprofitable frame of mind is any nation exempt?

The German carried it to an almost aggressive extent, yet certainly with as much to base it on as any other nation.

That the English-speaking races are possessed of noble qualities cannot be

denied; that they have exceptional traits characteristically their own is indeed true; but that they enjoy a monopoly of God's gifts of the mind and heart is most decidedly not true.

In their case the exaggerated opinion they entertain of themselves is due, to some extent, to the false history on which they have been nurtured, for they are, and have been, victims of a biased propaganda from their school-days.

The influence of the British Empire and the United States comes from the great natural wealth in these territories; from the power that wealth gives; from their favourable geographical positions; and from the practical skill with which their peoples have utilised such advantages to spread their influence.

Although we are dealing with religion, we might say with Christianity exclusively, these preliminary remarks are necessary, for the world cannot be right until Christianity prevails, and for the nonce we are addressing those who use the English tongue.

That Christianity was intended by its Divine Founder to supersede all other religions is not open to question, nor is it to be disputed that His Church was meant to be one and undivided.

Nor again can it be denied that Christianity and Christianity alone gave true civilisation to the world.

Up to the end of the fifteenth century, with the exception of the Eastern Schism (which was but a separation from Rome, not a formal change in the essentials of Faith), Christendom was one and undivided, and under one and only one religious or moral influence.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, under the pretext of abuses and laxity of morals at the seat of the Papacy, certain Christian countries under the leadership of self-appointed and discordant teachers, rebelled against the authority of Rome and formulated different creeds of their own, taken, as they claimed, from the Bible, which *they* asserted was the only rule of life.

We are not immediately concerned

with the justification or condemnation of those who followed that procedure; we are simply interested in showing what the consequences were as far as the world's welfare is concerned.

Where the new religion was adopted by the ruling prince it became nationalised; it constituted to the exclusion of all other forms the religion of the State, and is responsible for that exaggerated sentiment of nationalism that was non-existent prior to the Reformation, a sentiment that even aims at making of a national flag a religious emblem, as if Christianity can be restricted within any nation's limits—a sort of tribal cult that would split up Christianity according to political boundaries.

The love of one's own people and country is surely laudable, but when the spirit of nationalism exceeds the bounds of justice it is pernicious and has led in innumerable instances to injustice being inflicted by the stronger nation on the weaker.

The new forms of religion were not

the same in the different reformed States; nor in fact was there uniformity in each individual State; there were in every case dissenting sects, so that the new or "reformed" religion, as it was called, did not speak with a united voice, whether to the nations at large or to the people of each individual nation.

On one point only was there and is there agreement, hostility to the old religion, expressed on occasion in bitter persecution now rapidly becoming in its active form—except in North-East Ulster and in certain unenlightened sections of the United States—a thing of the past.

There still, however, lingers on the part of Protestantism an attitude towards Rome of a somewhat uncharitable self-righteousness constituting an embarrassment to clear thinking and impeding the full salutary influence of Christianity in the world's affairs.

The reformed religion enjoyed from the first and has continued to enjoy the protection and favour of the Civil State which surrounded it with all the circum-

stance that the State could bestow. Nevertheless, on the part of the people beyond a tacit recognition of an official religion there appears to-day but little appreciation of its message.

The appropriation of the old Church's properties and their application to secular purposes deprived the poor and needy of their patrimony and created the tragedy of pauperism in the Christian world.

This was followed in England by the ruthless enclosure of the common lands —to increase the possessions of those who already had much, and to rob the poor of the little they still possessed.

Spoliation of the poor, together with the irrational sacrosanct rights attributed to property by the new evangel, gave the world what to-day is known as capitalism, the cause of incalculable injustice, distress, and sorrow.

The separated Eastern, or Orthodox, Churches, as they like to call themselves, have had a sad history. The section that came within the dominion of the Turk was ground under his heel, the Russian

section became a mere appanage of the State, impotent to deter autocracy from its ruin or save the people from the catastrophe that has overtaken them.

There is no sign that the Protestant Churches of the West can regain whatever influence they may have had at the beginning or that their teaching can convey to the people a moral sanction. Their influence has waned, is still waning, and while reunion is the dearest aspiration of many who sincerely long to serve the Almighty to the best of their lights, the reunion they look for reaches no further than a loose confederation of diversified forms of faith.

It should be noted that neither the reformed religions nor the separated Eastern Churches have promoted the cause of civilisation, rather the reverse.

To turn Europe into a number of camps armed against each other, to saddle the peoples with the cruel burden of universal military service and colossal armaments, to spread corrupting luxury, to relax family ties, to flood the world with

inane and pernicious literature, to pander to human passion on the stage is not Christian civilisation.

As the Founder of Christianity intended His Church to be one—unless indeed He were the God of discord He could not have intended anything else—it follows that His Church must speak with one voice and not with a multitude of discordant tongues.

The Pope's claim to infallibility when speaking *ex cathedra* as Christ's Vicar on matters of faith and morals is resented by those who owe him no allegiance, and yet practically each and every preacher in the non-Catholic pulpits lays down the law, decides on the interpretation of the Bible, even in many cases on the Divinity of Christ Himself, on divorce, on birth control (than which nothing more satanic is preached or practised) with an assurance and pretence to infallibility that Ecumenical Councils hardly claimed, and this frequently in disdain of the opinion held by their own superiors, the members of the hierarchy, on whom many of those self-assertive infallible teachers depend.

Indeed the superiors themselves are not in accord as to what Christ's teaching is, nor, when challenged, do they as a rule care to attempt to define that teaching, because they are either not certain or fear contradiction.

The favour extended to Mohammedanism by Protestantism for political or material interest is hardly in accord with true loyalty to the Founder of Christianity.

That loyalty should have inspired true Christians to have saved the Armenians from annihilation at the hand of the Turk, but Christianity could not, it appears, be allowed to interfere with political interests, although the Armenians were the Allies' allies in the late war.

With those forms of religion held by the Mohammedans, Hindoos, Chinese, and Japanese, or with Paganism generally, we are not now concerned; the destiny of the world is or should be in the hands of Christianity, but it must be Christianity one and undivided and not as to-day *chaotic*.

Chapter III

THE WORLD'S SOCIAL CONDITION

THE social condition of the world is determined by the attitude of the individual man to his neighbour and the attitude of those collections of individuals called nations towards each other ; as that attitude is good or bad, so will be the social condition.

Man is a social being destined by His Maker to live in community. Even when in a savage state he lives in the community of the tribe, in civilised life under ordered government, so that his personal liberties may be protected and he may enjoy the amenities of cultured society, each member contributing his share to the maintenance of ordered life with interdependence on each other for all that life can give.

Men do not come into the world in every respect equal. Not all are endowed with the same physical or mental qualities, nor are all men's opportunities equal, nor is it within men's power to make them equal, but *all* men come into

the world with equal rights to life and liberty.

In the sight of God all men are *essentially* equal. The meanest of human creatures is endowed with an immortal soul as precious in His sight as that of the most highly favoured. To each human being is granted by God rights antecedent to and independent of the prerogatives of Civil Government. The individual does not exist for the State, but the State for the individual.

With man's natural and God-given rights the State must not interfere. With the essence of marriage and all that marriage means, with the rights of parents to control the education of their children, no civil power may justly meddle.

Destined therefore to live under social conditions, each individual contributing his or her share to the general welfare and happiness, it follows that these conditions to be perfect must be just, *i.e.* must not infringe the inalienable rights of anyone, and in as far as they fail to be

just to that extent are social conditions imperfect.

Happiness cannot be attained if injustice prevails, and whatever impedes happiness in communities or nations impedes the happiness and welfare of that collection of nations called the world.

To-day justice does not prevail anywhere, neither between the nations in their relations with each other nor between the different social classes that constitute the different nations.

Was not the late war fought to end all wars, so that the baneful principle "might is right" should not prevail; that the different nationalities should enjoy the privilege of "self-determination"; that no nation, however powerful, should enforce its will on another? All these principles of justice were by the Allies proclaimed from the house-tops.

Nevertheless, hardly had the smoke of battle passed away when in a vindictive treaty of peace was sown the germs of other wars, to eventuate perhaps at no great distance of time; wars that must

be more terrible than anything that has gone before, thanks to accentuated hatred and the progress of science applied to humanity's destruction.

Under the guise of mandates the victors at Versailles, forgetting the principles they fought for, conferred on themselves the control of unoffending peoples, and this simply to gratify the lust of power and possession.

To determine to-day whose the immediate responsibility for the late war profits but little ; it may, perhaps, be laid immediately to the charge of certain individuals, but the real cause goes much farther back ; it has been festering in the human heart for centuries, and the war that has been fought to make other wars impossible (as we were told), because forsooth of the inauguration of the Reign of Right, has left that heart unchanged ; or rather it has accentuated what may be described as international enmity.

It is, perhaps, beyond human power "to make other wars impossible," for, as in civilised communities a police force is

indispensable, so may such a force in military form be needed to keep the peace between nations, to restrain the turbulent, to resist aggression, and to afford protection to the weak, for which purpose war is both just and necessary.

No doubt the German people, schooled and led by their military Government, also wished to bear their share of "the white man's burden," as others were doing, and had cast longing eyes towards the lands of those whose skins are not completely white.

Winnowed from the chaff of canting hypocrisy, the "white man's burden" has meant in the past the spoliation of the nation that could not defend its liberty and property.

The tender consideration these "unburtheners" have for the welfare of their victims is most edifying; these latter are never quite ready for self-government; they are not yet sufficiently in possession of that superior civilisation enjoyed by the governing nations; they need training in temperance and self-discipline.

Yet what do their protectors teach them? Ask the Red Indian of the U.S.A., the black man of Australia, the negroes of the Congo—yes, and the East Indian subjected under imperial rule to periodical famines!

In a brutal reaction in Russia against an equally brutal regime, the proletariat has triumphed over capitalism, and although chaos has resulted, it is a "success" looked on with envy and a fixed desire of emulation by the underworld elsewhere.

Of this the other nations are aware, as is shown by their anxiety in dealing with those who at present control Russia's destinies to guard their own communities from the infiltration of Bolshevik doctrine.

Germany, Russia, and Turkey are, by the force of events and the action of the Allies, drawing together. The shifting of the combination of nations against each other has not, nor will not, cease until the old crude system of the Balance of Power is mended or ended.

No country is exempt from a struggle

between the classes. Why? Because both the capitalistic or employing class and those who sell their labour overstate their rights and neither class is inspired with a feeling of justice in dealing with the other.

The capitalistic system is wrong if it means that labour is a mere commodity, and until there is a change of heart in this respect there can be no peace.

Capital has indeed its rights, but until capital has paid labour at least a fair living wage under reasonable conditions of safety, health, and morality, capital has not done its duty.

Capital is powerful, labour is weak; consequently labour should be protected by law in its right of organisation, so that it may be in a position to deal on terms of equality with capital, and through that equality to determine the conditions under which labour is willing to serve.

Furthermore, when necessary, the State should be empowered to determine what the minimum wage must be.

Experience has proved that capital can-

not be trusted to be just. Capital is obsessed with the theory it has a right to do what it pleases with what it calls its own, which it most decidedly has not. It has not the right "to lay on the shoulders of the poor a burthen worse than slavery" (Leo XIII, Ency. *Rerum Novarum*).

Labour, too, has its obligations and responsibilities.

Labour must give full value for the remuneration received, must make the furtherance of the employer's interest a prime consideration, must get away from the idea that capital or the employer is necessarily labour's enemy, and must not restrict the development of trade by unreasonable exactions as to hours, limit of output, payment for overtime, or conditions under which service is rendered.

The "cash nexus" between employer and employed which Carlyle denounced does not provide for hard times; the wage-earner should be interested in the profits he helps to make and, be it noted, only helps, for capital also does its part,

and an important part, in the realisation of profits, as it suffers the losses when they occur.

There are few signs that capital is awakening to the reality of things, or even realising that in the long run its own interest will best be served by being just.

In England employers, availing themselves of the prevailing slackness of trade, are sparing no effort to destroy the trade unions. Do they imagine that the terms they are to-day imposing by force can possibly endure?

But yesterday we had the sorry spectacle of the President of a great nation, the U.S.A., appealing unsuccessfully to the magnates of an important industry for an eight-hours' day for the unfortunate people from whom they demanded shifts of twelve hours duration under the most trying conditions.

The magnates were sorry that the business, which needed a dividend on millions of watered stock, could not afford an eight-hours' shift. After all, those they employed were not 100 per cent.

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American, so it did not matter, and they could stand "the muck and heat"!

So little do these unfortunates relish the "muck and heat," and the cruel health-wasting over-work, that they rose in rebellion not so long ago against such inhuman conditions.

The means made use of to drive these people back to the "muck and heat," which included the service of an untruthful venal Press to rob the poor creatures even of their good name, make a notable chapter in the history of capitalistic materialism.

What passes in the trade referred to is no exception. American coal operators did not keep faith with the miners. They appeared to imagine that coal exists so that they can make a profit by under-paying those who need work to maintain themselves and their families. On the part of employers the effort is general to abolish all that the unions have secured during so many years of painful struggle to give the toilers a fairly decent living.

Capitalism everywhere appears to flatter

itself it can force things back to the conditions of past times when labour was but a pawn in its hands.

Capitalism is mistaken ; labour is too well aware to-day of what its rights are. That it will submit tamely to unfair conditions imposed by employers is unthinkable.

Justice must be the basis of well-ordered society, and if there be justice only the hopelessly criminal and perverse will chafe under the incidence of government. Capitalism to maintain its position and to defend what is claimed as its rights depends on repression, and on repression made effective through the action of authority capitalistically controlled.

In other words, the justice of capitalism's privileged position is seriously challenged, hence its appeal to repression as expressed in the draconic punishments inflicted on those who strain against that system.

On the other hand, labour, fully convinced that its cause is righteous, chafing under restraint and relying on numbers,

flings justice to the winds in the exaggeration of its demands, and where capitalistic repression fails Bolshevism ensues.

Neither under capitalistic reaction nor labour revolution can there be peace in the world.

Nor can there be peace until powerful governments cease imposing forcibly their domination on weaker nations or hold them in thraldom against their will; a crime which is being committed to-day by each of the Allied Powers and by the United States of America.

Nor can there be peace under the social conditions as at present prevailing in the United States, with an uncharitable attitude towards the unfortunate coloured race finding its expression in frequent lynchings, sometimes under conditions of fiendish cruelty, with its toleration of that egregious collection of men of perverted mentality and questionable courage masquerading under the name of the Ku Klux Klan, whose representatives, booted, spurred, and besheeted, have been known to stride into churches on Sundays to

offer money in charity, as if these anarchists knew what charity is.

This pantomimic display is not without its humorous side, since the incumbents of some of the churches so visited have expressed themselves as feeling honoured at the Klan's attention.

Nor can there be peace or well-ordered society as long as those to whom the functions of government are confided lack moral stamina.

The true statesman is guided by principles, the shifty politician (of which there is at present a surfeit) by what he deems to be expedient to his own political fortunes, so much so that many thoughtful people are of opinion that the legislator who has served one term should not be eligible for re-election, in the hope that by the removal of temptation the mere politician might give at least some signs of statesmanship.

The world indeed hungers for peace and social rest, of which it is denied through " man's inhumanity to man " or his stupidity.

Chapter IV

THE WORLD'S ECONOMIC CONDITION

IN teaching political economy it might be thought professors of that science, if science it be, would emphasise the fact that political economy began when man was condemned "to eat his bread in the sweat of his brow," or in other words to work for his living.

In imposing that penalty the Creator did not intend that man or any group of men should unload unjustly on another individual, group, or nation any part of his or their own legitimate burthen.

In fact, so that that should not be done, He enacted a code commonly called the Decalogue, obligatory for all individually or collectively.

Indeed so perfectly does the Creator arrange things, that the observance of that code brings to mankind peace and plenty; *per contra* its violation causes the mess the world is in now.

By labour are man's many and varied wants satisfied, Nature directly or indirectly responds to his toil, the re-

sultant product constituting the world's wealth.

In the designs of Providence it was not intended that the individual should by his own direct productive efforts provide for all his requirements; he must depend on others to furnish the goods necessary for many of his wants; in this may be recognised a wise dispensation that even in providing for material or physical needs there should be a sense of mutual obligation among men to each other.

The exchange of goods at first accomplished through the simple means of barter, soon demanded, as the families, tribes, and nations increased, a more perfect system, found in the adoption of money as a standard measure of value of goods, or, what is the same, of the value of the labour expended in the production of goods, consequently as an adequate medium of exchange.

Money has an additional function: it is labour's storage battery; the individual can accumulate in money that portion

of his labour's product not needed for his own immediate requirements or which he has not invested in property.

The accumulated product of labour is, perhaps, to a greater extent invested in property rather than in actual money; nevertheless by money is the market or exchange value of that property measured.

By capital is usually meant the product of labour used for further production. In labour's need of capital and capital's need of labour is again exemplified the interdependence of the different units of society.

In its most simple form labour must possess or enjoy the use of capital in tools or implements of agriculture; in its more complex form in the use of buildings, machinery, means of transportation, etc.

It is rightly claimed that capital is the product of labour, but it belongs to those whose labour or capital produced it and not to others, and with an absolute right to its enjoyment always within the limits of justice.

Since money is the standard of value, it follows it must be stable. It cannot be a measure of value if in itself it is subject to fluctuation, nor can it be a storage battery if through depreciation it loses its strength.

That these two dangers should, as far as it is possible, be avoided, gold was almost universally adopted as the money basis ; experience has proved the world offers no equivalent.

Mr. Ford said lately he wished to do away with gold that labour should be the standard of value ; has he asked himself with what standard will labour be measured ?

The late war entailed unprecedented destruction of wealth, and from the economic standpoint equally unprecedented waste of labour. Furthermore, future accumulation of wealth has been anticipated by the inflation of currencies.

No such conditions have hitherto been experienced so generally and to such an extent, and though since November, 1918, hostilities on a grand scale have ceased,

the terms of peace, with their fearful exactions and disturbance of the economic foundations of European civilisation, have rendered economic recovery increasingly difficult.

The low economic level to which the world has been reduced may be measured to some extent by the increased indebtedness of the nations as compared to pre-war times, plus the inflation of their currencies.

This, however, does not complete the picture, for it does not include all that has been destroyed, nor can we estimate the extent to which the world is injured by the disturbance of economic conditions through the changing of political boundaries or through the violent misappropriation and consequent misapplication of wealth in Russia.

We are confronted with an economic condition never equalled in the world's history, to remedy which there is no magician's wand. What has been destroyed, wasted, and disturbed, must be restored by persistent patient labour;

the world's motto to-day must be "*per ardua.*"

While there is no magician's wand to bring us back to normal times, much could be done to accelerate the pace were the world's moral fibre attuned to the task.

The trouble is that while all realise the wretched pass to which the war has brought us and efforts are being made to get back to economic normality, there is no sign that humanity has taken to heart the lesson the war should have taught.

The war was but the result or effect of the world's perverted mentality and wrongness of heart; while that perversion lasts there can be no permanent improvement.

The remedies proposed by statesmen to bring about better conditions are but superficial; they do not touch the real evil, the demon of materialism, which must be exorcised from the human heart.

Insistence on each one's own individual right or the rights of individual nations must always be conditioned by respect

for the equal rights of others. Strictly, rights of the same nature cannot clash, so there are definite limits to be ascertained ; speaking generally, neither individually nor collectively must we do to others as we do not wish to be done by.

Political or commercial selfishness masquerading under the guise of patriotism in raising unnecessary and artificial barriers that impede the free interchange of commodities is a great impediment to that harmony that should exist between nations ; such action is baneful in the extreme to those who through ignorance or through a misguided and exaggerated sentiment of nationalism place these stumbling-blocks in the paths of peace. Moreover, measures to that end do not and cannot produce the results claimed for them.

While sovereign nations are, of course, as far as other nations are concerned, entitled to enact within their own borders such measures as they deem advisable, especially if disposed to cast to the winds all desire of contributing to the world's

harmony, it is undeniable that commercial selfishness, while it offends against charity, hurts more those indulging in that practice than those against whom it is aimed.

Considered solely as a means of raising revenue for the purposes of government, no taxation a nation levies on the interchange of commodities is in itself to be reprobated, but it may cause more harm than good in the long run, and when a gravamen is imposed precisely to render that interchange difficult or impossible justice is offended, true cordiality impeded.

There are only four reasons why a nation may, in justice to its own people and to its sister nations, render the interchange of commodities difficult or impossible. These are:

1. When physical and social conditions are favourable, a protective duty may be imposed until the new or infant industry overcomes what economists call the *vis inertiæ*; in other words, until the new industry gets started. Protection pro-

longed beyond this point simply means that the great majority of a nation is being taxed for the benefit of a minority. From this there is no getting away. It is not true that protection can keep up the standard of living, nor is it true it keeps up the rate of wages; it does neither of these things; what is more, it cannot do them.

2. For the purposes of power or of defence, so that a nation may possess elements of defence, it is justifiable to protect these industries that will give her that power if she has not got it.

3. To prevent a social cataclysm should many be threatened with unemployment and consequent want through the importation of goods from other countries, in which case the protection should only be given while the trouble lasts; to perpetuate it would be the creation of a privileged class.

4. To impede the sale of goods produced by slave or sweated labour—a moral reason, yet a justifiable one, now of infrequent occurrence, if at all.

To-day not only is the interdependence of nations towards each other in regard to the production and exchange of goods not considered, but the tendency is to make that interchange as difficult as possible.

To put it bluntly, the policy of the nations of the world is stupid selfishness; they are all, owing to the demon of materialism that possesses them, unsuccessfully striving to unload on others their own burden, blindly endeavouring to accomplish that which harms themselves more than those against whom the restrictions are aimed. It is sinful on the part of any nation, no matter how powerful, to render, through ill-judged selfishness, more difficult the restoration of the world's economic condition.

Owing to the destruction of wealth caused by the war, most of the nations are impoverished; in their distress they have had recourse to the expedient (under any circumstances hardly an honest one) of issuing inconvertible paper currencies.

For justification of this measure appeal

is made to the stress of circumstances, and one must indeed acknowledge the stress has been heavy.

Currency inflation is, of course, no remedy, it simply puts off the evil day and renders the difficulty of getting back to normal conditions all the greater.

Every effort should be in the direction of giving stability to the different mediums of exchange, in other words to restore to the nations the purchasing power they have lost.

To reach this end there is no royal road, it can be reached only by intensified production, by the strictest economy on the part of governments and on the part of the governed, by taxation not only sufficient for the expenses and obligations of government, but enough to leave a reasonable margin for the gradual redemption of the inflated currencies of which no more should be issued.

Injustice is done to the governed when the expenses of government are excessive, thus consuming the nation's wealth in wasteful extravagance, in addition to

the pernicious moral effect of such useless expenditure.

Injustice is also done by the imposition of unduly heavy taxation ; carried to that extent taxation defeats its own ends by crippling a nation's productive capacity.

Loans from the countries possessing wealth to those in need may be necessary to help the latter in their distress, but such loans can only relieve the difficulty momentarily ; the trouble must be surmounted by each community within its own borders, at the cost of a great and unrelaxing effort—there is no other way. How long will it take ? Would it were possible to tell.

The present position is fraught with grave danger, even to civilisation itself ; rightly are thoughtful people preoccupied as to the outlook.

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Chapter V

THE WORLD'S COMMISSARIAT

PROVIDENCE has given all His creatures a bountiful world in which to live; has endowed humanity with qualities of heart and mind which, used in accordance with God's designs, would, amidst the inevitable trials of this life, assure mankind peace and plenty.

The fruits of the earth are, and ever have been, if properly distributed (the means of distribution are not wanting), more than sufficient for the ample sustenance of the human race, nor has the earth's ability to provide for a still greater population been even tested.

In this connection we may quote from *Some Political Ideas and Persons*, by John Bailey (E. P. Dutton & Co., New York): "We have the Dean of St. Paul's, not content to confine himself to wise warnings about the importance of quality in additions to the birth rate, but rashly hurrying on, undeterred by the fate of Malthus, to declare that every baby born can only make a place for itself by

extinguishing another, and to assume that the world's supplies of food and other commodities have reached their final level ; as if the increased rate of production during the last hundred years had not again and again shown itself capable of utterly outdistancing population and reducing Malthus and the Malthusians to confusion. For such revivals of refuted prophecy there seems no excuse."

With the exception of those lands cultivated by the nations of Western Europe, it is true to say the products of the earth can, by effective cultivation, be enormously increased.

Intensive cultivation applied to the growth of cereals on the Continent of America alone would more than suffice to provide for the world's wants in this respect.

In Spanish America, with perhaps the exception of the Argentine and Chile, the raising of cattle in the immense territories available in those countries is but in its infancy.

It would be impossible to determine

what the limit would be of the world's ability to supply all the wool, cotton, rice, tea, sugar, coffee, and cocoa that can possibly be needed ; the rivers and seas teem with food.

Unquestionably is bountiful nature offering food and raiment in abundance, yet millions are actually starving. Many millions more, not in the stricken regions of Russia or China, but in the very heart of that much lauded civilisation of Europe, are on the verge of starvation or suffering dire distress ; in other words, are in want of *their* share of that which nature offers for their sustenance and comfort.

On the other hand, rich classes are enjoying a superabundance of the good things of this world, and neither on the part of these nor on that of the nations is there any constructive effort worth mentioning made to relieve the distress of the day or to prevent its recurrence. There is therefore dire distress and criminal indifference.

That it should be so is *not* in accordance

with the designs of Providence, and to the extent that individuals or groups of individuals or nations contribute to the continuation of such conditions are they in opposition in the Divine Will, for we *are* our brothers' keepers.

Surely "The World's Commissariat" is out of gear.

Chapter VI

MORAL GUIDANCE IMPERATIVE

IT should be superfluous to offer proof that man must live under moral guidance. If his passions are unrestrained there can be no ordered society ; the quality of civilisation is and must be determined by the extent to which the moral code is observed.

This axiom is of general acceptance when applied to the individual or units of society, but is not held or has not been held obligatory when applied to nations in their dealings with each other ; in other words, when it became a question of a noun of multitude the moral law did not apply !

We have the criminal theory that a nation's lust for power, for possession and wealth knows no moral restraint, recognises the obligation of no law Divine or human.

That theory is almost universal ; it has not been exorcised by the appalling sufferings of the late war, which was carried to the limit of savage brutality simply because all moral restraint had been cast to the winds.

Had the lesson been learned that the moral code binds nations as well as the individual man, we would not have had the victors at Versailles allotting mandates to themselves over peoples upon whom they had not the slightest shadow of right to impose their sway. No, the lesson has not been learned, and the war that was to have been the last leaves the seeds planted for the next.

In the midst of their unholy trafficking the victors at Versailles would have a League of Nations to prevent future wars. Would that the League could have so salutary an effect! Perhaps through its medium it was hoped to assure the peaceful enjoyment of what the victors had acquired, including the mandates.

Well, the League is in being, what sanction supports it? What effective resistance can the League oppose to the ambition, the jealousy or selfishness of any nation or group of nations?

By this League, which is the outcome of human ingenuity, it is proposed to reach an end for which the Divine Founder of

Christianity gave us the means. His plan having been set aside, is it reasonable to suppose mere humanity can devise something better?

Would it not be more in accord with the dictates of prudence to give God's plan another and a better chance?

If nations, like individuals, are to behave themselves, they must be under moral restraint; they must harken to the voice of Divine Authority, a voice not interpreted to suit the whims of those who claim the extraordinary privilege of determining by themselves and for themselves what that voice means, but as expressed by the authority God Himself set up on this earth to teach all nations all things whatsoever He had commanded. A voice that must be infallible, as the Divine Founder of Christianity intended it should be, regarding what He had commanded should be taught.

So that the voice should be infallible, He promised to be with it all days to the end of time.

Nor is there any exception as to those

who are bound to hear and to heed that voice ; it is obligatory for the individual as for the nation, for the powerful as for the lowly.

Of what value would the Church Christ built be if it were to fail in teaching what it received from Him ?

Is it claimed that all through the fifteen centuries before the dawn of the so-called Reformation the Church had failed in her mission ?

Individuals, no matter how highly placed in that Church, may fail and have failed, "scandals there must be," but Christ set up no Church that could fail.

Moral control must, of course, be in each one's heart ; it needs, however, guidance and that guidance must be one, undivided and universal, a tribunal to which all may appeal, sure that justice will not fail.

History affords useful object lessons showing the harm and suffering caused through the want of an effective guiding influence ; for example, the virtual extermination of the North American

Indian, the rape of Acadia—redolent, perhaps, of the most refined cruelty history relates—the systematic extermination of the aborigines of Tasmania, and many other such atrocities which might be cited and which would not have occurred were public opinion moulded on right principles. It should be noted that where the aboriginal nations came under the control of the Catholic Church there was no extermination.

History affords many lessons proving that even with a laudable end in view incalculable harm has been caused because violence has been appealed to where suasion should have sufficed.

Take the case of the American Civil War ; slavery was undoubtedly an evil, but it could not possibly have survived many years the force of public opinion ; unfortunately the abolitionists were in a hurry and brought things to such a pitch that the fearful four years' civil war was inevitable.

Had there been a guiding moral force available violence would have been

avoided, the negro freed in due time with proper care for his future and not thrown in his helpless state on his own resources, a social pariah.

In the years immediately preceding that war the pulpits of the Eastern States rang with the denunciation of slavery, with the iniquities of the slave holder; it is so easy to ring the changes on the iniquities, real or imaginary, of others.

The time that has elapsed gives a better perspective, and we can see how it was the want of a guiding moral power that permitted both sides to rush into fratricidal violence.

The responsibility of the American Civil War can to a great extent undoubtedly be laid to the unrestrained irresponsible preaching of so-called Christian Churches.

Take again the question of prohibition in the United States; no doubt among the many impulses at the back of that measure was the moral or religious desire on the part of an influential sect to enforce temperance. It was, however, an impulse

in a hurry, willing to accomplish through the action of the civil power what should be obtained through moral suasion, disregarding absolutely an inherent individual right which, it may well be held, is morally beyond the prerogative of the Civil Power to restrict.

The result is that the measure is resisted by a large number who deny the right of the Civil Power to interfere with their personal liberty; it brings law into contempt and is pregnant of grave consequences.

The proposed planting of Palestine with members of the Hebrew race from different parts of the world with a total disregard of justice to the inhabitants of that land is another instance of the need of a guiding moral influence which would, in this case, have prevented measures being enacted at variance with common sense.

In fact where that influence is wanting not only do men's passions lead them astray, but their intelligence seems to fail.

To sum up, moral guidance is needed :

To ensure a correct mental attitude in the relation of man towards his Creator and towards his neighbour ;

To eliminate chaos from religious and philosophic teaching ;

That oppression may cease from among the nations and the classes and peace be restored ;

That human passions be not pandered to, but restrained ;

That immorality may not accelerate its downward course ;

That normal economic conditions be restored ;

That the resources of the earth be availed of to prevent want ;

That truth and justice may prevail ;

That civilisation may not perish.

* * *

The world has rejected the Divine plan for its safety, has scorned God's authority, and as a consequence civilised society is tending towards disintegration.

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